

Distinguished New Englander Discusses High Court's Decision on Public Schools

The Hon. Dwight D. Eisenhower
President of the United States
The White House
Washington 25, D. C.

Washington, D. C.
October 13, 1958

Carlton Putnam, who wrote the following letter to Pres. Eisenhower, is a member of the famous New England Putnam family, a native of New York City, a graduate of Princeton and Columbia, founder and president of Chicago and Southern Airlines (1933-1948), and is on the board of Delta Airlines. He recently published a widely-praised biography of Theodore Roosevelt.

My Dear Mr. President:

A few days ago I was reading over Justice Frankfurter's opinion in the recent Little Rock case. Three sentences in it tempt me to write you this letter. I am a Northerner, but I have spent a large part of my life as a business executive in the South. I have a law degree, but I am now engaged in historical writing. From this observation post I risk the presumption of a comment.

The sentences I wish to examine are these: "Local customs, however hardened by time, are not decreed in heaven. Habits and feelings they engender may be counteracted and moderated. Experience attests that such local habits and feelings will yield, gradually though this be, to law and education."

IT IS NOT MY PERSONAL CONVICTION that the local customs in this case were "hardened by time" for a very good reason, and that while they may not, as Frankfurter says, have been decreed in heaven, they come closer to it than the current view of the Supreme Court. I was particularly puzzled by Frankfurter's remark that "the Constitution is not the formulation of the merely personal views of the members of this court." Five minutes before the court's segregation decision, the Constitution meant one thing: five minutes later, it meant something else. Only one thing intervened, namely, an expression of the personal views of the members of the court.

It is not my purpose to dispute the point with which the greater part of Frankfurter's opinion is concerned. The law must be obeyed. But I think the original segregation decision was wrong, that it ought to be reversed, and that meanwhile every legal means should be found, not to disobey it but to avoid it. Failing this, the situation should be corrected by constitutional amendment.

I CANNOT AGREE that this is a matter involving "a few states" as Frankfurter suggests. The picture in reality is of a court, by a sudden edict, forcing upon the South a view, and a way of life, with which the great majority of the population are in complete disagreement. Although not from the legal, in fact from the practical, standpoint the North, which does not have the problem, is presuming to tell the South, which does have the problem, what to do. To me there is a frightening arrogance in this performance. Neither the North, nor the court, has any moral mandate inherent in the trend of the times or the progress of liberalism to reform society in the South. In the matter of schools, rights to equal education are inseparably bound up with rights to freedom of association and, in the South at least, may require that both be considered simultaneously. (In using the word "association" here, I mean the right to associate with whom you please, and the right not to associate with whom you please.) Moreover, am I not correct in my recollection that it was the social stigma of segregation and its effect upon the Negro's mind and heart to which the court objected as much as to any other, and thus that the court, in forcing the black man's right to equal education was actually determined to violate the white man's right to freedom of association?

IN ANY CASE the crux of this issue would seem obvious: social status has to be earned. Or, to put it another way, equality of association has to be mutually agreed to and mutually desired. I do not believe in equality of legal fiat. Personally, I feel only affection for the Negro. But there are facts that have to be faced. Any man with two eyes in his head can observe a Negro settlement in the Congo, can study the pure-blooded African in his native habitat as he exists when left on his own resources, can compare this settlement with London or Paris, and can draw his own conclusions regarding relative levels of character and intelligence—or that combination of character and intelligence which is civilization. Finally, he can inquire as to the number of pure-blooded blacks who have made contributions to great literature or engineering or medicine or philosophy or abstract science. (I do not include singing or athletics as these are not primarily matters of character and intelligence.) Nor is there any validity to the argument that the Negro "hasn't been given a chance." We were all in caves or trees originally. The progress which the pure-blooded black has made when left to himself, with a

minimum of white help or hindrance, genetically or otherwise, can be measured today in the Congo.

Lord Bryce, a distinguished and impartial foreign observer, presented the situation accurately in his *American Commonwealth* when he wrote in 1890:

"History is a record of the progress towards civilization of races originally barbarous. But that progress has in all cases been slow and gradual. . . . Utterly dissimilar is the case of the African Negro, caught up in and whirled along with the swift movement of the American democracy. In it we have a singular juxtaposition of the most primitive and the most recent, the most rudimentary and the most highly developed, types of culture. . . . A body of savages is violently carried across the ocean and set to work as slaves on the plantations of masters who are three or four thousand years in advance of them in mental capacity and moral force. . . . Suddenly, even more suddenly than they were torn from Africa, they find themselves, not only free, but made full citizens and active members of the most popular government the world has seen, treated as fit to bear an equal part in ruling, not only themselves, but also their recent masters."

One does not telescope three or four thousand years into the 78 years since Bryce wrote. One may change the terms of the problem by mixed breeding, but if ever there was a matter that ought to be left to local option it would seem to be the decision as to when the mixture has produced an acceptable amalgam in the schools. And I see no reason for penalizing a locality that does not choose to mix.

I WOULD EMPHATICALLY SUPPORT improvement of education in Negro schools, if and where it is inferior. Equality of opportunity and equality before the law, when not strained to cover other situations, are acceptable ideals because they provide the chance to earn and to progress—and consequently should be enforced by legal fiat as far as is humanly possible. But equality of association, which segregation in Southern schools involves, presupposes a status which in the South the average Negro has not earned. To force it upon the Southern white will, I think, meet with as much opposition as the prohibition amendment encountered in the wet states.

Throughout this controversy there has been frequent mention of the equality of man as a broad social objective. No proposition in recent years has been clouded by more loose thinking. Not many of us would care to enter a poetry contest with Keats, nor play chess with the national champion, nor set our character beside Albert Schweitzer's. When we see the doctrine of equality contradicted everywhere around us in fact, it remains a mystery why so many of us continue to give it lip service in theory, and why we tolerate the vicious notion that status in any field need not be earned.

PIN DOWN THE MAN who uses the word "equality," and at once the evasions and qualifications begin. As I recall, you, yourself, in a recent statement used some phrase to the effect that men were "equal in the sight of God." I would be interested to know where in the Bible you get your authority for this conception. There is doubtless authority in Scripture for the concept of potential equality in the sight of God—after earning that status, and with various further qualifications—but where is the authority for

the sort of *intra* equality suggested by your context? The whole idea contradicts the basic tenet of the Christian and Jewish religions that status is earned through righteousness and is not an automatic matter. What is true of religion and righteousness is just as true of achievement in other fields. And what is true among individuals is just as true of averages among races.

The confusion here is not unlike the confusion created by some left-wing writers between the doctrine of equality and the doctrine of Christian love. The command to love your neighbor is not a command either to consider your neighbor your equal, or yourself his equal; perhaps the purest example of great love without equality is the love between parent and child. In fact the equality doctrine as a whole, except when surrounded by a plethora of qualifications, is so untenable that it fails to pieces at the slightest thoughtful examination.

FRANKFURTER closes his opinion with a quotation from Abraham Lincoln, to whom the Negro owes more than to any other man. I, too, would like to quote from Lincoln. At Charleston, Ill., in September 1858 in a debate with Douglas, Lincoln said: "I am not, nor ever have been, in favor of bringing about in any way the social and political equality of the white and black races; I am not nor ever have been in favor of making voters or jurors of Negroes, nor qualifying them to hold office. . . . I will say in addition to this, that there is a physical difference between the white and black races which I believe will ever forbid the two races living together on terms of social and political equality. And in as much as they cannot so live, while they do remain together, there must be the position of superior and inferior, and I am much as any other man in favor of having the superior position assigned to the white race."

The extent to which Lincoln would have modified these views today, or may have modified them before his death, is a moot question, but it is clear on its face that he would not have been in sympathy with the Supreme Court's position on segregation. Many historians have felt that when Lincoln died the South lost the best friend it had. This also may be moot, but again it seems clear that for 94 years—from the horrors of Reconstruction through the Supreme Court's segregation decision—the North has been trying to force the black man down the white Southerner's throat, and it is a miracle that relations between the races in the South have progressed as well as they have.

PERHAPS the most discouraging spectacle is the spectacle of Northern newspapers dwelling with pleasure upon the predicament of the Southern parent who is forced to choose between desegregation and no school at all for his child. It does not seem to occur to these papers that this is the crudest sort of blackmail; that the North is virtually putting a pistol at the head of the Southern parent in a gesture which every Northerner must contemplate with shame.

Indeed, there now seems little doubt that the court's recent decision has set back the cause of the Negro in the South by a generation. He may force his way into white schools, but he will not force his way into white hearts nor earn the respect he seeks. What evolution was slowly and wisely achieving, revolution has now arrested, and the trail of bitterness will lead far.

Sincerely yours,
CARLETON PUTNAM

Additional donations to publish Mr. Putnam's letter in other newspapers will be appreciated.

PUTNAM LETTER COMMITTEE, James E. Simpson, Treasurer,
317 North 20th Street, Birmingham 3, Alabama

Enclosed please find my contribution to aid in publishing the Putnam letter.

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From Our Early Files

Harrowing scenes of the 1929 flood are related in a yellowed and tattered copy of The Elba Clipper of May 2, 1929, found by Mrs. Wade Mallory, of 528 Claxton St., recently while rummaging through an old cedar chest.

Among the items in this issue were:

(1) An expression of thanks on behalf of all the people of Elba for aid given to this city from many sources. The letter was signed by Mayor R. L. Cooper, Barlow Bullard, C. P. Hayes, W. J. White, O. Dowling.

(2) A news story from Montgomery that the state would set new valuations on the property in Elba to give owners lower taxes.

(3) A news story that the Red Cross had awarded \$25,000 for relief work here and that registrations for aid would close May 6.

(4) Letters from Senator Black and Congressman Steagall telling of efforts to get federal aid for victims of the flood.

(5) A letter to The Elba Clipper from Judge J. A. Cherry in which he expressed amazement that The Clipper was back in operation so soon after the equipment had been covered by water.

H. C. Bryan, then the editor and owner of The Clipper, tells some of his experiences as follows: "Thursday morning, Mar. 14, we were informed that we had better get everything off the floor. We paid no attention but about 9:30 a.m. when the water started to come up the street outside and rose six inches in 10 minutes, we not only moved everything possible on tables and shelves all over the shop, but to no avail.

The water started washing things about in the street. I went to get the car. We started taking the motor and things off the latrine machine and started out. The car drowned.

out in front of the Baptist Church. I went home, down by Beaver Dam Creek. Some men were carrying people out in boats.

"I went home and stayed with my sister until the boat could be back. There were two National Guardsmen with her. I was not there but a little over 30 minutes. The water rose over two feet in that time. The boat got back at last and my sister and some more ladies got in."

"I went to Wesley Ham's home where some 25 or 30 people were, and stayed until the water started to come into his front yard. I went to Mrs. Carrie Bullard's home. By night the water was coming under the house. Brother Paul and Brother Franklin were up there. We had prayer services that night. We had no water, no food and no way to get any."

"Thursday night was without doubt the most dreadful and haunting night that Elba people ever witnessed. It was simply wonderful the way the women and children kept their heads. They did what the people asked them to do."

"About midnight we heard a mighty crash, and a woman screamed. It was just across the street. Mr. Arthur 'Boutwell' home had washed over in the hole and had tumbled up side-

ways. There were two women and three men there. They cut and tore holes in the roof, and climbed out. They did not have anything to eat or drink for about 17 or 18 hours.

"There were 100 people in Mrs. Bullard's home Thursday night. On Friday night there were between 150 and 200 people."

"Between 9:30 and 10:30 o'clock Friday morning the first airplane flew over. By 1 o'clock there were no less than 10 flying around over town, dropping food, milk and boat motors."

"Friday morning at five o'clock the water stopped rising and started falling. Slowly at first but later more rapidly. Friday the food started to come more rapidly. One small boat from Troy, with only a boy in it, went to some little store where the whole stock was floating out the door. He loaded his boat and brought the food to us."

"It was one of the most dreadful things that I have ever experienced in the history of Alabama, but after all, I think we have just millions of things to be thankful for."

"After it is all over, if there is such a thing, I would not expect to see the state of Alabama on the map. I would not expect to see the state of Alabama on the map."



What does the Lord require of thee but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?
(—Micah 6:8.)

For all the greatness of His love and mercy to us, God requires so little of us—and yet some of us find that little so difficult. We find it so hard even while doing justly, to be merciful to those less fortunate, to be humble in our proud self-assurance.

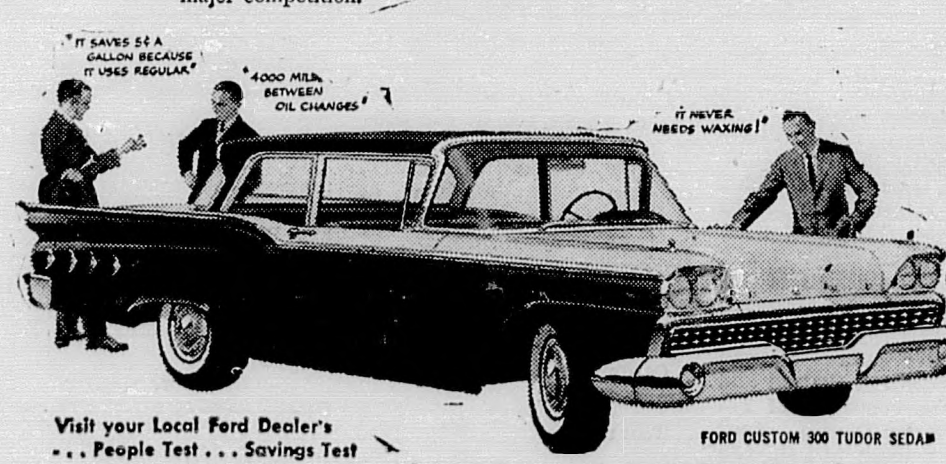
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There is a growing concern in the cotton trade over the handling of Choice "A" cotton. . . . the law says the COC must purchase the "A" cotton to support it. . . . this puts the government in business as never before. . . . prior to this the farmer always had the choice of withdrawing his supported cotton from the loan if he wished. . . . now there is no choice on "A" cotton. . . . much of the concern centers around the destruction of the competitive marketing system.

Hot Planting
You may be missing a bet by planting your cotton when the ground is too cool. . . . some research indicates that you can get better emergence and better yields by putting the seed in the ground when a 10-day average soil temperature of not less than 60° has been reached. . . . suggest you talk to your county agent about it.

Bravo!
We know of a gentleman in Texas whose livelihood is tied closely to cotton. . . . whenever a salesman calls on him the Texan takes a close look at his visitor's shirt. . . . if it isn't cotton, the salesman doesn't sell a thing.

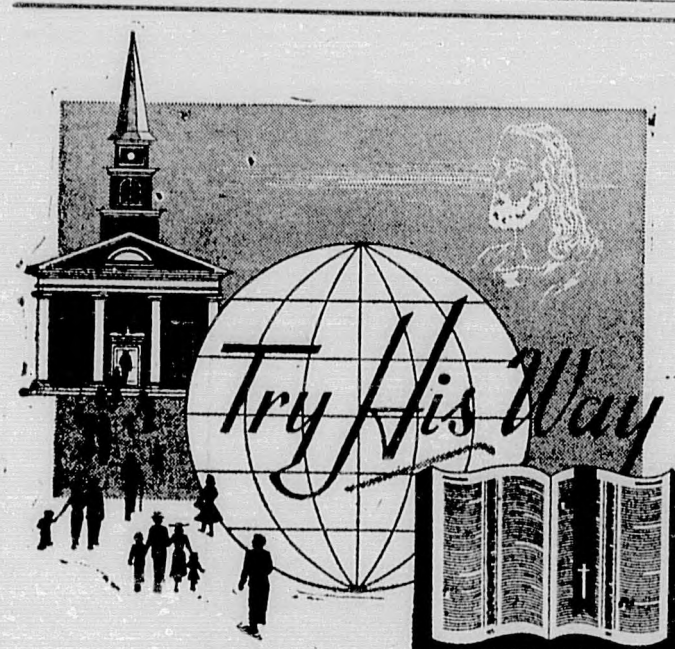
Council to Meet
National Cotton Council will hold annual meeting in Atlanta, Ga., Feb. 9-10. . . . over 1,000 persons expected. . . . Council's research department quotes garment manufacturers as saying wash-and-wear finishes have done more to boost sales of cotton fabrics than anything since annexation.

SCHEDULE FOR BOOKMOBILE IS SET FOR WEEK

Bookmobile Schedule for Coffee-Geneva Counties for the week beginning Monday, Feb. 16.

Tuesday, February 17—
New Hope, Wilson's Store 9:15
New Hope School 9:45
Crossroads Col. Sch. 10:30
Rochon, Mrs. Fredwood 11:00
Chestnut Grove, Avanti's Store 11:15
Mrs. Houston 11:30
Mrs. Vonelle Crenshaw 12:00
Victoria, Thomas's Store 1:00

GO TO CHURCH SUNDAY



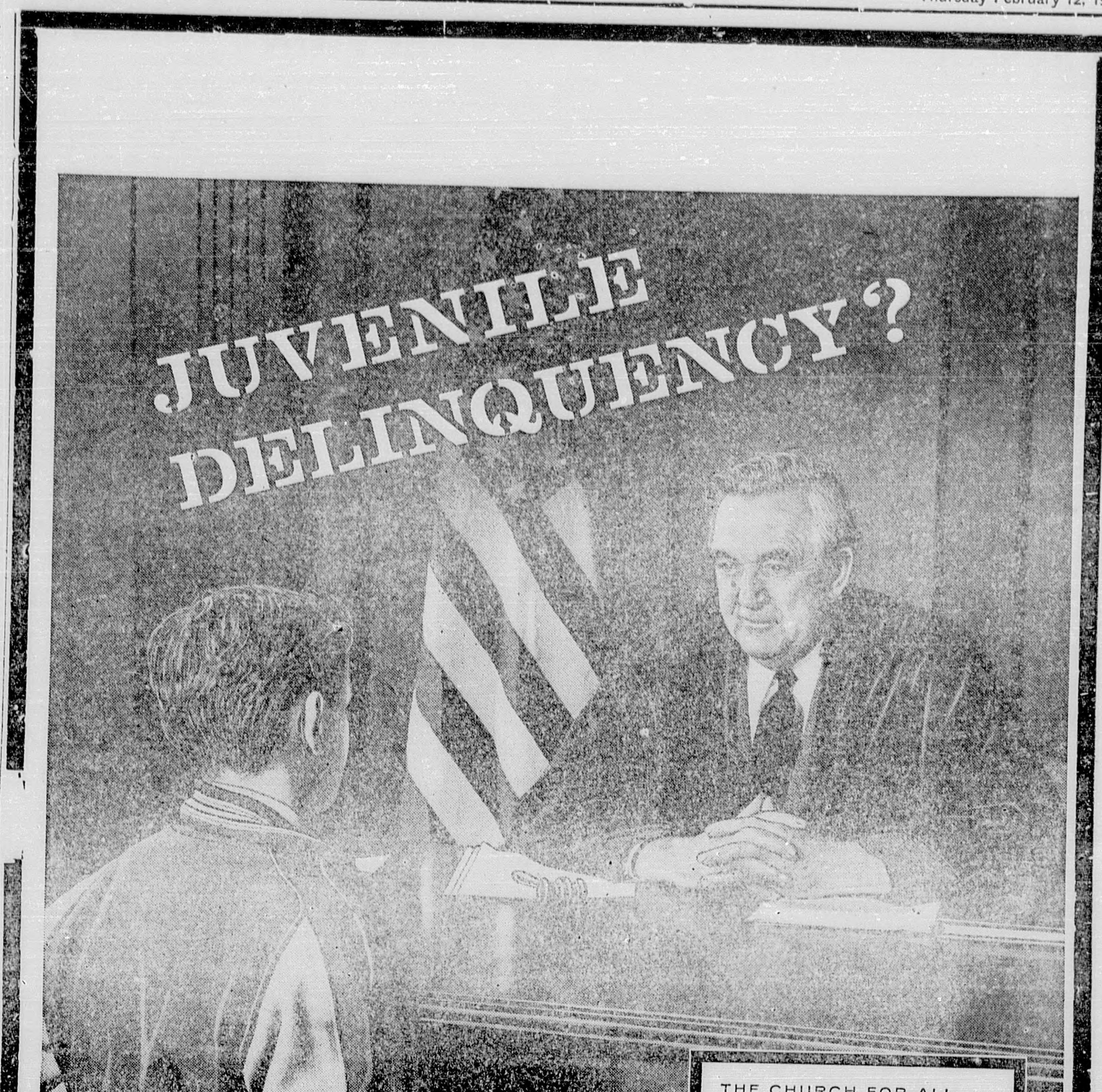
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Who said there is no such thing as juvenile delinquency?

Look at the record! Millions of boys and girls under twenty-one in trouble with the police—lope traffic among teen-agers—organized crime by minors.

But this is not always juvenile delinquency. This is often the tragedy of ADULT DELINQUENCY. It is frequently the result of neglect, indifference, and lack of Christian training in our homes. It is the failure of parents that has led to the wreckage of many of these young lives.

Bring your child to Sunday School and Church. Give him the spiritual care that he wants and needs. Remember, Mother and Dad, we cannot always say, "juvenile delinquency." Be sure it is not your failure which may cause your child to ruin his life.

Day	Book	Chapter	Verses
Sunday	Luke	15	11-25
Monday	Zechariah	9	4-6
Tuesday	Ephesians	6	2-4
Wednesday	Galatians	1	6-17
Thursday	Mark	11	20-26
Friday	Proverbs	6	20-24
Saturday	1 Samuel	18	1-30

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Through the Keyhole

By Mrs. Robert Cannon

OUR HOSTESS set her table with silver and crystal and a centerpiece of pink carnations to bring out the pink flowers on the china. The buffet was filled with tempting dishes and no one was bashful about getting it in use. The host provided adept at making everyone feel at home and the evening flew by.

We always enjoy hearing Margaret talk as her Virginia accent takes us back to college days and occasions like the Manassas Gold Cup Paper Chase and all the traditions that are Virginia. In her own

home she proved a perfect hostess. And we all regretted that Rainer Jr., and Horton Flick from attending.

THE MONTHS FLEW BY and it seemed that Mimi and Ralph Powell had never been away as they walked into church with Jean Van and Carolyn Stokes. How marvelous it was to see them and it made us realize again how much we have missed them. Mimi, lovely as ever, was vivacious and talked eagerly of her life in Mobile. Ralph has established himself as a rising young dentist and the future looks bright for these two.

Daughter, Dottie, was the center of attraction for all our children when several couples gathered at Genette and J. Doug Kendrick's home on Sunday afternoon to visit. Drink coffee and eat the delicious cake that J. Doug kept passing around. Dottie has grown into a young little girl with a shy smile and large deep eyes that will prove the downfall of many of Mobile's future young men, we predict.

OFF TO VISIT her mother for a week is Betty Hendricks.

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—THE ELBA CLIPPER—

who confided to us that she was really excited over going home. Young Randy and Steve will thoroughly enjoy being at Grandma's house and Betty will have the chance to see relatives and old friends. It's grand to spend days in the midst of one's family.

THE SILENCE where once was heard the laughter of children's voices is quite heavy. And we here on the Hill are missing the Kindergarten now that Helen Rainer has disbanded that group. We certainly hope she will ring the bell for these youngsters next fall as we know one little girl who loves the whole idea.

Elba Boy Starts Hitch In Marines

Ralph Harrison, son of Mr. and Mrs. Manuel M. Harrison, Route 1, Box 75, enlisted in the Marine Corps and is now undergoing basic military training at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot, Parris Island, S. C.

A highlight of the 12-week course at the South Carolina Marine Base will be Private Harrison's visit to the rifle range where he will fire the M-1 rifle for qualification. Upon completion of the initial training, the Elba youth will report to Camp Lejeune, N. C. for a four-week advanced course in military tactics. He will then be granted a 15-day leave prior to assignment to his first duty station or to one of the many Marine Corps technical schools for specialized training.

LAW ON PENSIONS
"People under age 72 who are drawing old-age and survivors insurance benefits may continue to work without any loss of benefit checks as long as they do not earn over \$100 during the calendar year," Harry Scott, manager of the Dothan district office of the Bureau of Old-Age and Survivors Insurance explained today.

In 1956 the Navy established radio stations in the Antarctic as Little America (KQUSA), McMurdo Sound (KQUSV) and Marie Byrd (KQUSB). The latter is the first radio station in history to be at the South Pole.

Get the Clipper Reading Habit

REAL ESTATE TRANSFERS

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Southern Supply and Contracting Co. to Flournoy Whitman, \$4000.

U. S. A. to Coffee County Board of Education, \$100.

Thomas Weeks Bradley to Gibson Bradley, \$2500.

J. H. Fleck and wife to Frank Davis, \$300.

National Security Ins. Co. to William Stanley Prior, \$1200.

Ethel R. Paoz et al to Richard Jacobs, \$1000.

Artist Smith and wife to J. H. Fleck, \$5200.

Howard Danley and wife to H. A. Johnson, \$2200.

Mae and W. H. Rhodes, et al to O. N. and Verrah Clyde Rhodes, \$1000.

National Security Ins. Co. to Vera Mae Hodges, \$800.

Mae Rhodes, et al to Vera Bell Ellis and husband, \$2500.

MARRIAGE LICENSES

Willie Grover Chancellor, 22, Opp and Hilma Jean King, 29, Opp.

Radio Station W-E-L-B Programs

Elba, Alabama

Monday Thru Friday—

6:00—Sun. on.

6:01—Hayloft Jamboree, Country Music.

6:30—Local News.

6:45—Hayloft Jamboree, Country Music.

7:00—Coffee Club, Popular Music.

8:30—Morning Dev. Hymns.

8:45—Public Service Program, Music.

9:00—Mid. Morning Melodies, Popular Music.

10:00—Musical Memories, Old Songs.

10:30—Album Time, Outstanding Album.

11:00—Gospel Favorites, Gospel Music.

12:00—Hayloft Jamboree, Part 2, Country Music.

12:15—Lambert Melodies, Instrumental Music.

1:00—Public Service Program, Music.

1:15—Musical Matinee, Pop. Music.

3:30-3:50—Club Hall of Hits, Popular and Rock and Roll.

5:00-5:25—Sundown Serenade, Popular and Rock and Roll.

5:30—Sign Off.

6:00—Sign on.

Sunday—

7:15—Sign on.

7:16—Hymns.

7:45—L. Wade.

8:00—Assembly of God.

8:30—Back To God, Rev. J. L. Grant.

9:00—Church of God, Rev. W. A. Grant.

9:30—Sunday Morning Melodies, Pop. Music.

1:00—Sunday Music, Pop. Music.

5:00—Sign Off.

METHODIST HOME FOR THE AGING—



LIBRARY HAS GAIN

Circulation for libraries of the Cross Trails Regional Library service hit an all time high during January with total books read being 41,698. A progress report of the building increase over the previous month was Elba, Florida, Opp, Westview, Brantley, Dozier, Laverne, Geneva and Sumner.

The American flag was first officially displayed over Alaska when Russian troops lowered their flag and U. S. Marines hoisted the Stars and Stripes at Sitka on Oct. 18, 1867.

For COLDS take 666

"OLD AGE IS AN INFECTIOUS CHRONIC DISEASE"

There apparently is no cure that will prevent old age.

It is possible to be old in years, but much younger in bodily health if you properly take care of yourself. Many signs of lengthy diseases can shorten your life. Modern methods of treatment, helped by the new "miracle drugs," can actually add years to your living at the first sign of any illness. He will prescribe medication that can overcome disease before it ravages your body.

Quotation by E. Metchnikoff

(1845-1916)

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—THE ELBA CLIPPER—

Thursday February 12, 1959

GO TO CHURCH SUNDAY

IMPORTANT!

NATIONAL SECURITY DEPENDS ON THIS, TOO!

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